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NIAGARA NEWS

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NIAGARA COLLEGE LRC

Grieving mother fights for justice

By LAURA T. RICCIUTO
Staff Writer

A mother is seeking justice.

Just days after retiring from 32 years of service at Niagara College in the Print Centre, Joanne Stubbins' work is far from over.

More than a year after losing her daughter, Robyn Lafleur, 37, in a work-related explosion, Stubbins may have some closure to an incident that "never should have happened."

Following the adjournment of provincial and federal charges in December 2000 trials will recommence in February.

"I want justice for Robyn. It never should have happened and it was preventable," says her mother.

As she sits in a rocking chair in the family room of her cozy Welland home, the blue paint on the walls matches the sombre tone of the conversation.

Proud of her child, as most parents are, she recalls her daughter as a woman who would always volunteer to help someone in whatever way she could.

Her daughter "loved stock-car racing, working on her truck, loud music" and with a chuckle she adds, "She loved the Tazmanian Devil. Does that tell you anything about her personality?"

With visible difficulty, the mother revisits an event that suddenly changed her life.

She explains that shortly after her daughter began work the morning of Nov., 8, 1999, at Esquire Canada Inc., in Port Robinson, she was caught in an explosion that would eventually claim her life.

Lafleur worked for almost nine years at the plant that manufactures caps for toy cap guns. Previously she had been employed with Niagara College's Facilities Management at the Maid of the Mist Centre in Niagara Falls.

"I'm angry. I'm angry that Robyn's life was cut so short."

Taking a gasp of air to quickly compose herself, Stubbins struggles to fight back her sadness. Explaining the severe injuries her daughter sustained in the explosion, she says, "This is where it gets hard."

Her daughter suffered from burns to her entire body. Part of her leg was severed. She had multiple shrapnel injuries caused when the plastic container exploded.

"She was full of the plastic," explains her mother as tears overflow, adding that pieces of plastic

Continued on page 3

Students cheered each other during a spaghetti eating contest held in the After Hours pub at the Welland campus on Tuesday. The event was part of Student Administrative Council's Winterfest 2001. See page 10 for additional photos.

Photo by Bill Stephenson

Apprenticeship program receives grant to improve quality

By KEVIN HARTFORD
Staff Writer

The Ontario Ministry of Training has awarded Niagara College a $430,000 grant for its apprenticeship programs.

"They gave us $430,000 worth of contracts — five contracts — from (the province's) Apprenticeship Innovation Fund," says Brian Moukperian, the college's director of Integrated Manufacturing and Skills Training.

"The purpose of the fund is to improve the quality of apprenticeship training, enhance the delivery and move or improve the direction towards competency-based training."

Last year, Niagara College had a "small contract" of about $80,000, "so this is a significant amount of money for us. This year is five times what we had last year," says Moukperian.

The grant will be used to standardize exams, so that "now there will be a provincial exam for all colleges. The apprenticeship branch said they want all students to take the same test at every school."

Moukperian says, "Our first job is to get all the tests from the colleges, all the areas, each subject. Then we sift them through. Then we come up with the most consistently good questions, the most consistently good answers with all of the subject matters, all of the levels, for the (apprenticeship) programs."

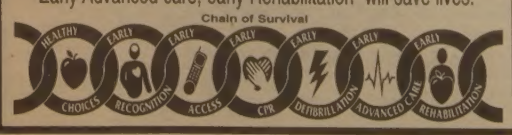
Moukperian says this process will "establish a consistency so colleges are using the same tests. We'll call the other colleges, make decisions on the questions. 'That's too easy, that's a lousy answer, this is a better answer.' We'll set up the workshop and do all of the background work. We've been at this stuff for a good month, planning and setting up workshops.

"This will improve the quality of the programs."

We're 4th in the nation in men's volleyball. See page 12

Heart NIAGARA

Heart Niagara is committed to battle the risk factors connected to heart disease through public education and health promotion. **The Chain of Survival** is a concept by which "Healthy Choices, Early Recognition, Early Access, Early CPR, Early Defibrillation, Early Advanced care, early Rehabilitation" will save lives.



CPR Training/First Aid Training

CPR is the most important first step in reducing pre-hospital deaths. For information contact Josie Bozzo at (905) 358-5552

Community Public Access Defibrillation Training

Advocating timely access to defibrillation throughout the Niagara Region. Contact Jim Boutilier (905) 358-4937 ext. 3914

Smoking Cessation Program

Heart Niagara has partnered with Niagara Health Services to offer the community a Smoking Cessation Program. Call (905) 356-2236 ext. 223

Courses are available for individuals and groups, on site or at a training centre.

Heart NIAGARA
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WOMEN IN TRADES

Women act as mentors in non-traditional trades

By KEVIN HARTFORD
Staff Writer

It used to be called the Women in Trades and Technology program. Then it was the Women in Manufacturing program. Now it's called Women in Skills Trades program.

"They're just titles," says Brian Moukperian, director of Integrated Manufacturing and Skills Training at Niagara College.

"When it was first developed, women would take a smattering of trades — two weeks of plumbing, two weeks of machinery, two weeks of electrical. In 1998, the Ontario Women's Directorate, which is a branch of the government, received some funding in a more specialized area — to provide training to women in one sector, in this case the machining sector.

"Women can come to the college for 30 weeks and receive some intensive and extensive training on machine shop, which is lathes, milling machines, grinding, drilling and machine operations."

The Women in Skills Trades program lasts 50 weeks, 30 weeks of in-class training and 20 weeks of on-the-job training.

"This is the first time we've done it in an intensive fashion. Up until now it was a very superficial introduction," says Moukperian.

"If you lined up 100 apprentices of all trades, only five out of the 100 would be women, maybe 10. The fact is, it takes many years to overcome the stereotypes, whether it be age in terms of a young person entering the workforce, age in the terms of the older worker, or gender. It takes many, many years. I think these women will be pioneers."

Moukperian says the graduates of the Women in Skills Trades programs will act as role models for women interested in a career in trades and technology.

"These women, wherever we place them, will act as mentors for the next group that comes through, and clearly this is important in society."

Moukperian says employers shouldn't care whether their employees are male or female.

"I think (employers) for the most part are looking for capable workers, regardless of anything else. I'm convinced that by showing up every day, having good attendance, working well with others and accomplishing whatever it is you set out to do on the job, gender shouldn't matter.

"I'm convinced of it. Whether you're a reporter, whether you're a chef, whether you're an executive, people want you to be there, work well with others and get the job done in an excellent fashion."

National junior curling champs will be chosen here

By SCOTT ROSTS
Staff Writer

Break out the brooms and rocks. The Canadian Junior Curling Championships are coming to Niagara region.

From Feb. 3 to Feb. 11, more than 800 fans and supporters are expected to watch 13 teams of junior men and 13 teams of junior women battling for the honour of being national junior champions, and the chance to compete in the World Junior Championships in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Team members are all under 20 years old. Doug Geddie, chairman of the host committee of the 2001 Karcher Juniors, says some are as young as 13.

Competitors representing every province, the two territories and an additional team from Northern Ontario, will compete on sheets of ice at the St. Catharines Golf and Country Club and Jack Gatecliff Arena in St. Catharines. There will be five sheets of ice in each venue, created by Teo Frans, who made ice for curling at the Nagano Olympics.

"It's exciting. The junior players are athletic. They're fearless and will take any shot. They're emotional. They'll cry if they win; they'll cry if they lose," Geddie says.

Stu Black, director of marketing for the host committee, says the competitors are "at a very high calibre."

Black is Niagara College's project manager of New Media Development.

The men's and women's finals will be telecast nationally by CBC. More than 700 people are expected for the final games, which will be held at the St. Catharines Golf and Country Club.

The event opens at noon on Feb 3, when teams will be introduced and the event banner will be raised. The first ceremonial rock will be thrown by three-time world champion and St. Catharines native Marilyn Bodogh.

Tickets for the event can be purchased online at www.KarcherJuniors2001.com

STU BLACK

or you can call 682-8681 to order by telephone. Ticket prices range from $3 a draw, to $5 a day. The semifinals will cost $10 and the finals are $15. For $50 you can get a pass to all events.

The men's finals will be telecast on the CBC television network on Saturday, Feb. 10, at 1:30 p.m., while the women's finals will be aired on Sunday, Feb. 11, at 1:30 p.m.

Whether you go see it in person or watch on television, Black says it will be "delightful."

"You're going to see some great strategy and some real great execution of shots. They are just delightful to watch."

President's Advisory Forum

Be part of the solution.

Join College President, Dan Patterson, for the President's Advisory Forum

Monday, February 5
12:30 to 1:30 p.m.
at the Welland Campus
Room S211

Mr. Patterson invites all students and staff for an open discussion of issues, concerns and questions effecting the Niagara College community.

We want to hear from you!

NIAGARA COLLEGE CANADA

EYE ON NIAGARA

Mother fights system after daughter dies

Continued from page 1

had become lodged in her daughter's neck near her jugular vein and a piece had ripped through her left eye.

Lafleur was taken by ambulance from the Port Robinson plant to the Greater Niagara General Hospital in Niagara Falls where she briefly regained consciousness — for the last time, explains her mother.

She tearfully recalls it was the last time she'd exchange words with her daughter.

Within hours of the blast Lafleur was skylifted to the Hamilton General Hospital where a burn trauma team prepared for her arrival.

Lafleur began the first of many operations she would endure before losing her battle.

"I didn't think that Robyn was going to make it."

Stubbins says she considered organ donation but doctors rejected the offer. Eventually, she was able to donate her daughter's right cornea.

Ten days after the explosion, on Nov. 17, Lafleur died at the Hamilton hospital with her loved ones by her side.

With sudden and spontaneous flashbacks of the mother and daughter relationship they shared, Stubbins smiles and quickly discloses details of her cherished memories.

'I miss Robyn.'

Many of her recollections include their enjoyment celebrating holidays together. Among their favourites were Halloween and birthdays, says Stubbins, explaining how she and her daughter would gather pumpkins to carve as a shared project and treat each other to steak dinners for their birthdays.

With a sigh she mentions they didn't have their special dinner together for her daughter's birthday on Oct. 24 that year because Joanne was in the hospital at the time.

Stubbins remembers the last Halloween they shared a week before the tragic accident. As tears show her pain, she looks to the picture of her daughter beside her and says, "I didn't have a pumpkin this year."

Stubbins says she'd like to do some travelling during her retirement, as well as start a support group to help bereaved families cope with their grieving.

Stubbins, who has a background in health and safety, says she is "more than willing" to talk, listen or cry with families who find themselves in a similar situation.

Anyone interested in more details on support group sessions can reach Don McMillan, a friend of the family, at the Workers' Health and Safety Centre, at (905) 545-5433.

"Any workplace fatality is completely unacceptable," says Stubbins, adding, "Had I not had the background in health and safety, I wouldn't have known what to do."

Trials in the provincial court are to be held Feb. 1, in St. Catharines, while the federal trial is on Feb. 2, in Welland. Both are scheduled for 9 a.m.

An inquest into her daughter's death has been called. Investigations will begin 90 days following the end of all trials.

"I miss Robyn. Sometimes I still expect her to walk through the door," says Stubbins. Of her daughter's death, she says, "I want closure."

Joanne Stubbins treasures the memories she shared with her daughter Robyn Lafleur (photo) before a workplace explosion in November 1999 caused her death.

Photo by Laura T. Ricciuto

Task force wants to end scheduling difficulties

By LAURA T. RICCIUTO
Staff Writer

Niagara College officials are going into combat.

Members of the college administration have introduced a "team" task force to investigate the recent causes and confusions of student timetable scheduling.

Prompting the development of the task force were, college officials explained, "difficulties that inconvenienced students."

Some of these included the absence and tardiness of student schedules, as well as the "confusion" over the location of classes.

"Our goal as a task force will be to look at all aspects of the scheduling process, and come up with solutions to prevent problems from occurring in the future," stated Beth Weldon, chief information officer, in a Niagara College press release Monday.

The release includes a comment from Bonnie Rose, vice-president academic, that "the college is committed to identifying the causes of the problem and moving quickly to fix them — our students deserve nothing less."

Nearly a month after the winter term's start, students are being requested to "share" their experiences and suggestions with the college. Students can forward their comment to feedback@niagara.on.ca.

"We acknowledge there were difficulties that inconvenienced our students, we regret this very much and apologize," stated Rose.

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Members

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Caught on camera at health fair

Second-year Dental Hygiene program students Serene Hunt, 21, (left) and Jamie Jarram, 22, and first-year Dental Assistant program students Michelle Dodd, 20, Lisa Stirtzinger, 23, and Tara Tellier, 23, at the health fair at the Welland campus on Jan. 15.

Photo by Kevin Hartford

Students at the Welland campus gym buff up before Spring Break on the beach, see centrefold, pages 8 and 9

From left (clockwise) Jimmy Guits, 20, of Niagara Falls, a student in the Art & Design Fundamentals — Graphic Design Production program, with the barbells; Paul Walker, 20, of Burlington, a student in the Law and Security Administration program, on the bench press; Jennifer Micallef, 33, of Fort Erie, a student in the Educational Resources and Special Needs program, on the treadmill; Renato Camarda, 30, of Toronto, a student in the Art & Design Fundamentals — Graphic Design Production program, is stretching; Melissa Bura, 22, a student in the Broadcasting — Radio, Television and Film program on the leg press; Dee Mackie, 21, a student in the Police Foundations program, is working her abs, and Sharon Strome, 21, of Lindsay, a student in the Dental Hygiene program, on the rowing machine.

EDITORIAL

The Niagara News is a practical lab for the Journalism-Print program, covering the college community and other areas of interest.
Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the management of the Niagara News or the administration of
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Computers have changed our lives

No need to leave the house. You own a computer.

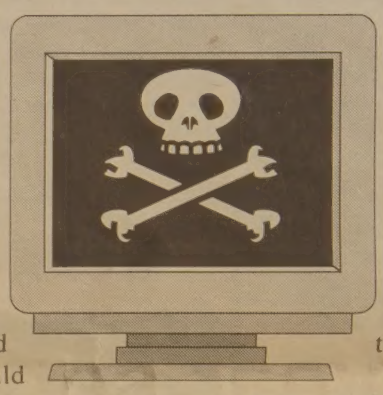
It's true. Computers are such a huge part of our lives we no longer need to leave our homes.

When computers were first available we could play games and type correspondence and essays. Now, with the Internet, we can do everything from shopping to watching television.

Computers can help us do everything. Who needs a telephone when you can type messages and respond through the ether and, remarkably, see the person with whom you are having a written dialogue? You might as well get rid of your stereo since you can listen to CDs and download songs from the Internet via your computer.

You don't need to go out shopping. Everything you need is online. It can even be delivered.

You can meet new people via the World Wide Web. And television? That's so last month. You can watch everything from news to the latest movies on your computer monitor.



We are becoming so dependent on computers we're beginning to forget about the world around us. I would rather sit at a computer for hours checking my e-mail than go for a long refreshing walk in the country. Is it possible computers are making us lazy?

Sure, they can be educational aids and allow us to expand our knowledge, but has our use of them gone too far? Are computers becoming much more than an activity or research tool? I think so.

I can spend hours on the computer and, before I know, the day has passed and, worse, it doesn't bother me.

If this technology has had this impact on our lives, imagine what our children's lives will be like. Then it will fall to our generation to blame computers for the corruption in our society, rather than television.

Computer technology will continue to grow either in a positive way or negatively. It is up to each of us to control the way it affects our lives.

Patricia Hughes

Gay marriages should be legalized

What do you talk to your family about during dinner? May I recommend gay rights? This was the conversation topic for one of my family's dinners not too long ago. Next time you sit down to eat, try bringing up one of the latest topics in gay rights: gay marriages.

Should married gay couples be legally recognized? If two people love each other, there is a premise for them to be married.

Pretend you're in a bar. Sitting across from you is a longtime friend. You're sitting, talking, sipping on your beverage, when your friend tells you there are two men kissing at the counter behind you. You laugh, but are still curious. "You're lying," you say to your friend. "Just take a look," he replies. You think to yourself, "I've never seen that before." Turning your head slowly, you begin to look. Clutching your sweater, your teeth are grinding and sweat forms on the palms of your hands. You're in position. You open your eyes cautiously and . . . see the severely drunken man you had met earlier that night kissing another man. You've probably seen two men sneak a kiss on the television screen, but never in person. Are you shocked? Do you scream out in pain? Or giggle to yourself? How would you act after seeing the impossible right in front of your eyes?

You should act mature. Everybody has feelings, and you should respect them. However, the point is that these two people were embracing in a way that expressed their love for each other.

All you need is love to be married; no matter what sex you are. If the reason non-gay people get married is love, then why isn't the love of gay people recognized? It is unfair to only recognize certain kinds of love.

The issue to follow gay marriage would be having children. But even with children the issue remains. It shouldn't matter what sex the parents are as long as they love the child and take care of it well. As Beatle John Lennon said, "All you need is love." Although he may have been using it in a different context, it still holds ground.

It is the government's job to serve and recognize the needs of its people. It's understandable how hard it must be for some to accept this non-traditional form of love, but the world is always changing, and so will people.

So why doesn't the government recognize the rights of gay couples? How does it hurt anybody? The traditional values of some people aren't appropriate in a world that is experienceing a technological revolution. We have cell phones that can connect to the Internet, and we can watch live television broadcasts on our computer screens from around the world. But we can't recognize the fact that everyone is capable of love.

Bill Stephenson

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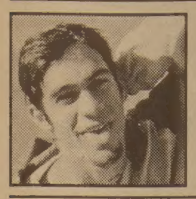
VIEWPOINTS

Slow walkers: difficult situation for all



By DAN D'AMICO
Staff Writer

A man like me has many pet peeves, ranging from terrible drivers, moody cats, people who conveniently leave their dog poo on the sidewalk in front of my house, to the dreaded slow walker.

Yes. I speak of that very difficult, somewhat embarrassing situation. What to do when you are stuck in a one-way snow-plowed alley with a slow walker ahead of you? Do you make the pass? Do you just give in and try to follow the person's slow, rhythmic steps?

I will pose the question rather than provide a solution. If you are hoping Dan the Man is going to give you an answer, I am going to have to say, "sorry, folks, not today."

Take my recent situation. I was stuck on a snowy path behind a walker I thought was plotting ways to annoy me by slowing his pace. I could tell, because my counter-plot of simply passing him seemed to spark some sort of realization in the young man. While he enjoyed the semi-nice, smooth surface of the path, I had the luxury of making the pass on a hilly, icy terrain of pure snow before we both hit the pavement at the same time.

My maniacal grin must have given away the fact, coupled with the statement, clearly expressing the phrase; "I just conquered you." Lo and behold, I could hear his steps on the pavement falling in tune with mine. Something must have happened, for his slow, terrible pace seemed to have caught up with mine. That didn't stop the grin or the augmenting of my pace to maximum velocity.

Do not slow down to the speed of the pace car (the person) on the one-way, narrow access route. You must make the pass and show the walker you have backbone.

In a situation like this, the solution is to try to show no fear. Do not slow down to the speed of the pace car (the person) on the one-way, narrow access route. You must make the pass and show the walker you have backbone. Show the walker you shall not be late for class. Show them that you, the walking gifted, will be the pacesetter of the world.

What happens if the walker is an elderly person? What happens if the walker is in a group, and you are out-numbered? I do not know.

What I do know is "Ask not what your walking can do for you, but what you can do for your walking."

Please, people, make a lane for slow walkers so the rest of the world can get on with our business.

Never too early to learn employment rights

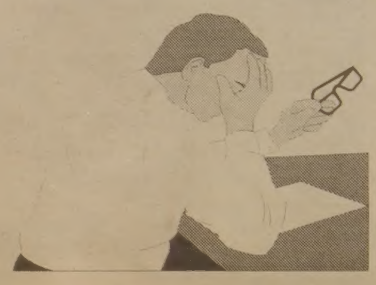
By LAURA T. RICCIUTO
Staff Writer

It's never too early to learn your employment rights.

Following a work experience in which I had been shortchanged on several of my pay cheques, I decided to investigate what my legal employment entitlements included.

Employees, including me, are ignorant of their rights and responsibilities under The Employment Standards Act.

The laws are put into effect by the provincial government supposedly to protect employees and employers, yet little is done to educate employees of their rights and responsibilities.



It's my belief, this is the reason employers find it so easy to take advantage of unsuspecting employees.

Through researching the laws I gained a better perspective on how and why employers do this.

My translation of the axiom "Ignorance is bliss" is "It's like taking candy from a baby."

You see, if you are unaware of your rights you can't claim your rights.

I'm not saying awareness will make everything run "by the books," but if you don't know or exercise your rights, you are helpless.

"Ignorance of the law is no excuse." Take a stand. Know your rights and be prepared to stand up for them because if you don't you can bet your bottom dollar nobody else will for you.

Latimer's 10-year sentence long overdue

By PAUL FINELLI
Staff Writer

On Jan. 18, the Supreme Court of Canada unanimously ruled that Robert Latimer must serve at least 10 years in jail for killing his severely disabled daughter Tracy.

Good, I'm glad.

The decision to punish him for second-degree murder was long overdue since the Saskatoon farmer had taken it upon himself to end his daughter's life in 1993.

Latimer never denied killing his 12-year-old daughter, a quadriplegic with severe cerebral palsy. He later admitted to placing Tracy inside his pickup truck before pumping the deadly exhaust carbon monoxide fumes inside. He has always maintained it was to spare his daughter from future agony, not himself from his.

Latimer's sentence is, of course, a victory for advocates of the disabled, the disabled themselves.

Traci Walters, of the Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres, said it best to the press: "It sends a very strong message to society that people with disabilities, that our lives are just as important as anybody else." Indeed it does.

However, not surprisingly, Latimer's lawyer, Mark Brayford, was quick to condemn the sentence, citing it as "troubling" that his client's minimum sentence is longer than the jail term being served by infamous Karla Homolka.

Yes, Homolka's sentence was far too light for her active part in the sex killings we now know about all too well, but one wrong turn doesn't warrant another one. What Homolka got away with doesn't justify the law turning its head or merely slapping the wrist of Latimer.

The decision to punish him for second degree murder was long overdue since the Saskatoon farmer had taken it upon himself to end his daughter's life.

Homolka's crimes were worse in the perversity of her actions tied to her equally infamous ex-hubby's Paul Bernardo's sadistic deeds. This I do not dispute.

Nevertheless, Latimer ended his daughter's life. His helpless, disabled daughter's life. Ten years is a reasonable sentence, granted maybe not long enough.

True, I cannot really imagine what he must have gone through in taking care of his ill daughter, but I can never conceive of killing my own child.

True, I don't know 100 per cent if Latimer was being deliberately malicious when he pumped in the deadly toxins that would take his daughter's final breath, but he has proven ever remorseless since the fact.

If Robert Latimer has — and it appears it, given his repeated statements to the media — not a shred of remorse or iota of regret or sorrow for his daughter's loss, and his role in it . . . Dare I say, he isn't much better than a certain other killer.

Spoiled children need discipline from parents

By CHRISTINE CHALONER
Staff Writer

That familiar sound pierces my ears again.

Will it never stop? It won't unless the parent takes this child and shuts him up.

That may seem harsh but I don't mean by any horrible means like taping the child's mouth. Rather, the child requires a little discipline.

There's a difference between an excited child's shriek and a child's "I'm not getting what I want" tantrum scream. Children are children. It's the non-stop screamers who carry on everywhere they go who need to be disciplined.

When I am having dinner at a restaurant, I cringe when I see a family with children seated next to me. Yes, they have all the rights in the world to eat dinner out, as I do, but not when the parents can't control their children. My fears are fulfilled when one, two or sometimes three children start shrieking and climbing out of their chairs, staring at me.

I don't have children. Can you tell? When I do, though, I'll take a measure more in getting them to sit down than, "Oh Timmy, leave that nice lady alone." Meanwhile, this "nice lady" wants to get up and plop the child back in his chair and tell "little Timmy" to stay there or else.

This threat does not mean horrendous consequences, but rather something as simple as punishment. Taking a treasured object away will probably do wonders, or just knowing the threat could be put into action.

That is how I was disciplined — by the simple threat. I was never hit, spanked or grounded but there was something about the gruff "or else" that made me think twice.

The question remains: why are all these parents allowing their children to control them?

Children use the "or else" statement themselves many times, but their threat is real and their parents know it. Children are quite smart and their "or else" means "I'm going to humiliate you right here until I get what I want."

Therefore, children fulfil their threats. Parents don't. Problem defined.

Before all parents hate me, I agree not all children, nor all parents are like this. It's just that the majority of cases I see when I'm out come down to children walking smugly away since they got what THEY WANTED.

Recognizing Efforts

Kerrio staff, president win Misty Awards

By CALUM McNEIL
Staff Writer

Niagara College is among the best in Niagara's tourism industry as it won recognition in two categories of the 34th annual Murie Misty Awards on Jan. 12.

The awards recognize excellence in hospitality and tourism during 2000 in the region.

The Maid of the Mist Centre's Kerrio Dining Room staff at the college's Niagara Falls campus received the Hospitality Award, and college President Dan Patterson won the Murie Misty Award for people not directly employed in tourism who have worked diligently to promote the industry in 2000.

'Niagara Falls is working at becoming a world-class tourist destination.'

The 500 people in attendance at the Niagara Fall's Hilton watched students Glenn Murray, Khristina Zayac, Sonya Dragan and Warren Zeldhuis accept the award on behalf of the 40 students that make up the Kerrio Dining Room staff.

"I was delighted that our students were given recognition," says Patterson, adding, "The college is very proud of its student servers who work at perfecting the food skills of the restaurant service business."

Patterson says being recognized by the industry is another sign of the importance it places on education and training.

"Niagara Falls is working at becoming a world-class tourist destination, and the Maid of the Mist Centre is quickly gaining a reputation as one of the best stand-alone campuses dedicated entirely to hospitality and tourism."

Patterson says it was "gratifying" to receive the Murie Misty Award. "I believe very strongly in the important role that tourism plays in the Niagara region, particularly in wealth creation and job opportunities for students. Having the industry recognize my commitment through this award means a great deal to me."

Patterson says, "This award really belongs to the staff at the Maid of the Mist Centre and the students who make an enormous contribution as they take on careers in one of the fastest-growing industries in the world."

The Murie Misty Award is named after Don Murie, former manager of the Niagara Falls Chamber of Commerce.

Congratulations

College President Dan Patterson poses with his Murie Misty Award.
Photo by Calum McNeil

Students have their say on performance of SAC

By HEIDI MORRISON
Staff Writer

Has the Student Administrative Council (SAC) improved?

Second-year Recreation and Leisure Services program student Sarah Mazak says yes.

"I have noticed more publicity around the school, which helps so we know what events are coming up."

Mazak, 20, of Talbotville, Ont., says she feels the SAC presidents are doing what they can.

"In a setting like Niagara College, it's hard to make students see what's going on, but I have seen a lot of improvement, overall."

She says she'd like to see SAC working "more closely" with students in the residences. Perhaps more activities could be organized for those living on campus.

"And I think it would help if SAC wasn't tucked away at the back of the pub. They're too out of the way. Maybe an office in Simcoe (the Simcoe building) would help get them more interaction with students."

'SAC should have more fun and interesting things for the election.'
— Melissa Bura

Asked if she will vote in the next SAC election, Mazak says she won't because she graduates this year and doesn't think it's "fair" to choose representatives whose decisions won't affect her. "Otherwise, I definitely would."

Melissa Bura, a 22-year-old Broadcasting — Radio, Television and Film program student, says she would vote "if the candidates were out there."

"SAC should have more fun and interesting things for the election. I'd like to see a debate (or) something that introduces me to the candidate. Last year, all I saw were the little posters with someone's picture on it and a headline that tells us to vote for that person."

Bura, of Kitchener, asks "but what is that person going to do for me?"

To help promote itself more, Bura suggests SAC have a booth at school events and "just tell students what's going on."

As for SAC's performance improvement during the year, Bura says, "They've started to do a bit more. They are trying and I give them credit for that.

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Canada

BIOGRAPHY

'Teaching — that's my love': professor

By PAUL FINELLI
Staff Writer

While most Niagara College students may not know her by name, they do likely know her work.

Yolande Bissonnette is a professor of customer service and customer-relationship management courses in the Office Administration — General and Office Administration — Executive (Co-op) programs through the School of Administrative Studies at the Welland campus.

Born in Chicago and raised in Europe, the 51-year-old, who now lives in Welland, came to the college in 1979. While teaching office administration courses in French, she pursued her bachelor of arts with distinction in romance studies over seven years at Brock University in St. Catharines. She completed that degree in 1987. She said she specialized in French and education courses to complement the office administration courses she was teaching in French.

In 1991, she completed a Canadian Institute of Certified Administrative Manager's designation, after which, she said with a smile, "I decided, well, it's time to relax from studying, so in 1993 I wrote my first book, *Office Systems: People, Procedures and Technology*." The book took her a year and a half to write.

Her second book, *Office Systems: People, Procedures and Communications*, begun in 1998, was recently published. Used "mostly by future office administrators" in colleges across Canada, both books, published by Irwin Publishing in Toronto, deal "with what happens in an office: the communication, etcetera."

Bissonnette's achievements at the college, though, involve creating new student-based course evaluations to be used throughout the college.

As Bonnie Rose, vice-president academic, explained, "The college asked her, we asked her, to spearhead this project because she's such a well-respected teacher and a person who really knows how to bring people together. This is a very important project, the big new initiative for the college. It's very important that it's done well, and she's done a great job."

No standard course evaluation existed here before the first were pilot-tested in April 1999, Rose noted. They were used in every course at Niagara College last October.

Beginning the project in October 1999, Bissonnette spent about three months looking at assorted evaluations at other colleges and doing a lot of research, including resources from the Centre for Professional Development at Niagara.

She took advice as to the kinds of questions to ask and to avoid. It was then she formed the team of representatives from various departments and student groups. It met frequently.

With 10 team members, she said, "I think we went through probably 11 drafts of this instrument and then what we did, we made sure that it was distributed to the college community for feedback, so that we could input some of the changes that the teachers felt were important."

"We had a pilot in April (1999) to test it out . . . but then we had the big pilot that just happened in October of this year. And that's when 100 per cent of the courses in post-secondary were done."

Tabulated by an outside consulting firm, the results, she added, were received in January and have already been distributed to the teachers. "It's been an interesting process because it's one way that we can find out what the students think about the courses that they are taking." This ensures "we can be better at what we do, which is to teach."

Designing the course evaluations was "great because it's a feedback instrument," Bissonnette remarked. "That's what I teach in my customer relationship management, that in order for any organization to get better you need to ask your clientele, your customers, your students, what it is that we're doing well, what are some of the things we need to improve on. I think that's the strength of any organization."

> ***'I think that she is both loved and respected and she's one of those very special people that everyone is happy to see coming when they see her coming.'***
> ***— Bonnie Rose***

Describing herself as "a people person," she said the project was "an interesting process" since it allowed her to work with "very nice people here at the college" from the three campuses, including various student groups, such as the executive of the Student Administrative Council.

"This was a team effort really because we got so much feedback from teachers, support staff, etcetera, that, really, when the form finally came to its final format, we knew that it was something that most of the people at the college had had a chance to view it."

As for the results? "There are still questions that need to be answered," including the timing and frequency of the evaluation, and the level of participation from all courses.

"Like anything else, this is not a project or a form that stays the same. It's going to be evolving so that it becomes a more valuable tool for the teachers to use."

Bissonnette continued to teach three to six hours a week while overseeing the project. She chose not to teach this term because, at the end of February, she begins a sabbatical. She will work on an International Customer Services designation via correspondence with Rockhurst College Continuing Education Center in Chicago and admitted her impatience for getting started.

"I'm so interested in this because I teach customer service and I teach customer relationship management courses so, of course, for me this ties right back in." Besides her education she plans "some travelling for fun." Expecting to return on May 1, 2002, she'll teach again full time. She said she enjoys teaching most.

"I enjoy teaching because I learn as much from the students as they do . . . I love my students." She added the college is "such a great place to work" because of her colleagues. "I trust these people implicitly. We work so well together. We have the same teaching philosophy."

Asked if she had any further career ambitions, Bissonentte said no. "Teaching — that's my love."

Rose described Bissonnette as "an outstanding faculty member" and "an extremely accomplished and well-respected teacher."

"Not only is she tremendously effective in the classroom but she also is a true leader in developing academic content. She is our resident expert on customer service . . . I think that she is both loved and respected and she's one of those very special people that everyone is happy to see coming when they see her coming. Terrific individual."

Office administration professor Yolande Bissonnette — a key force behind the college's new student course evaluation — is looking forward to her year-long sabbatical, which begins in March.
Photo by Paul Finelli

Heart NIAGARA

Heart Niagara is committed to battle the risk factors connected to heart disease through public education and health promotion. **The Chain of Survival** is a concept by which "Healthy Choices, Early Recognition, Early Access, Early CPR, Early Defibrillation, Early Advanced care, early Rehabilitation" will save lives.

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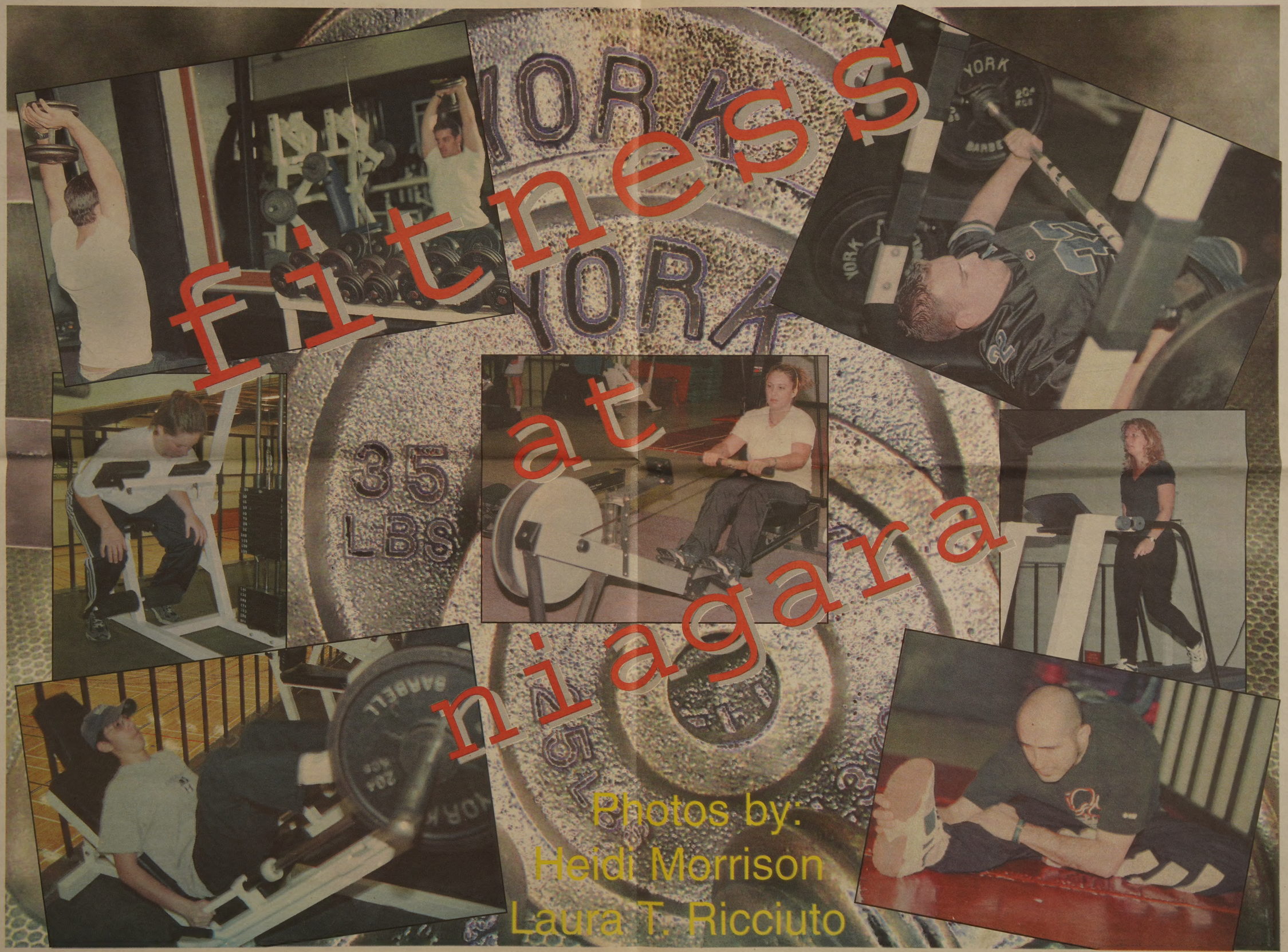

fitness
at
niagara
Photos by:
Heidi Morrison
Laura T. Ricciuto

ENTERTAINMENT

Winterfest 2001 slides into Niagara College

From Top Left: Running down an obstacle course at 100 kilometres an hour on a crazy carpet was part of the Student Administrative Council (SAC) Winterfest activities planned for the week of Jan. 22 to 26. Did flipping off the crazy carpet get this guy bonus marks? Whatever he did, the bump and flip must have hurt. Next, "scarfing" down spaghetti demands intense concentration. Look ma, no hands! The awards presentation for the SAC Winterfest will be held today at 10:30 a.m in After Hours.

Photos by Bill Stephenson and Heather Ruta

Movie buffs, test yourselves on HSX

By RYAN McLAUGHLIN
Staff Writer

So you think you have a gift for predicting the next Titanic?. Perhaps you know whom the next Meg Ryan or Brad Pitt will be. Well, it's time to put your money where your mouth is.

Nearly half a decade after its conception, the Hollywood Stock Exchange (HSX) is taking Internet gaming to a new level.

The concept is simple. Instead of the traditional greenback that Wall Street lives and dies by, a member of HSX uses Hollywood Dollars to trade shares of stocks, options and funds. The shares can range from the new Jerry Bruckheimer blockbuster, to rumours of Spielberg's next epic. With the Academy Awards on the horizon, HSX is trading NominOptions, which allow traders to buy and sell their guesses as to who will win Oscars this year.

Created in 1996, by Max Keiser and Michael Burns, HSX was patented in 1999 and has gone on to receive designations as "Best of the Web" by Forbes Magazine and one of the "Top Gaming Sites" by Yahoo! Internet Life magazine.

The site boasts that it isn't all just fun and games. The trades its members make actually influence which movies are produced and which are sent to development hell, a mythical place that is easy to get into, but not so easy to get out of. According to an HSX media release, industry officials keep an eye on what stocks people are buying and which are as stale as three-week-old bread.

Membership is 100 per cent free, and when you sign up you get two million Hollywood Dollars to kick off your portfolio. Should you choose to, you can sign up and get two million more Hollywood Dollars to start trading on the Music Market.

Added to the site in June of 1999, the Music Market works much the same way as the Movie Market does, in that you trade shares of stocks, options and funds but with one obvious difference, it's the music industry not the movie industry.

Backed by financial giants Citigroup and the National Broadcasting Co., HSX has proven to be a cash cow for advertisers who wish to target their advertising at HSX's movie-minded members.

HSX also has its in-house TV show called Buy, Sell, or Hold. Launched in May 2000 the show's two hosts, Michael O'Rourke and Heather Heine use their casual dialogue to speak on coming, or currently released movies and actors, and how their stocks are doing on the market.

A fun, competitive, and addictive site, HSX shines through in an overcrowded medium that is marred with boring and mundane content.

So if you are a movie buff, or just like educated gambling, give www.HSX.com a try and test yourself before you lose your shirt on the real stock market.

Children and Toy Story equal enjoyment

By CHRISTINE CHALONER
Staff Writer

My first thought as I enter the HSBC Arena, formerly Marine Midland Arena, in Buffalo, N.Y., was that I was trespassing.

In a place normally filled with noise, the smell of beer and hockey fans, HSBC had been transformed into a daycare centre.

Children of all ages were running around the stands where alcohol is usually sold. Instead of peanuts being hawked by vendors, there was cotton candy. The escalator was being used as an amusement park ride.

This sudden change was due to the visit of Buzz and Woody.

Toy Story on Ice was performed from Jan. 10 to Jan. 15 in Buffalo after playing in Toronto at the SkyDome.

Starting out the show was Mickey Mouse. The children cheered his arrival as well as those following him — Minnie, Donald and Daisy — but applause was the loudest for Goofy.

This show was filled with songs, and provoked laughter, amazement and a touch of fear.

The skaters performed almost perfectly, and they amazed the audience with their turns, flips and jumps.

Sid, the terror of a neighbour, captured Buzz Lightyear and Woody at one point and brought them back to his room to torture them. This caused the little girl behind me, who was kicking my chair in delight for half the show, to shriek in fear during the entire scene.

However, all ended well, as any Disney fan would know, when Woody and Buzz got home safely.

This may seem an awful way to spend an evening, with thousands of screaming children, but as a Disney fan, I enjoyed it.

The child in me was in awe as much as the kids were.

Life on AM Radio bleeds tunes with character, class

By RYAN McLAUGHLIN
Staff Writer

Canadian music is about to score another album proving borders mean nothing when it comes to good tunes.

Life on AM Radio, the soon-to-be-released album by Canadian band Hennessey, is 11 tracks of colour and depth. From start to finish the album bleeds pop-like tunes that have character and class.

This, the second album from the band, picks up where their last album, **Dig It Up**, left off.

Songs like *Buddhamatic* light up this album and flow nicely into more lyrical tracks like *Cosmonaut* and *Delilah*. With harmonious vocals, solid licks and uplifting beats this album is a pleasure to listen to.

Life on AM Radio is due out in stores Feb. 27, and if you can't wait that long to hear the album, you can catch it in live when the band performs at After Hours pub here Wednesday, Jan. 31 at noon.

ROAD WARRIOR

NIAGARA COLLEGE LRC

Visiting automotive heaven in Detroit

By NAUMAN FAROOQ
Staff Writer

Hello, dear readers. Enjoying the break in the weather we've been having? I hope the weather improves and the snow starts to melt away soon.

The improvement in our weather meant I was able to go to Detroit to attend the 2001 North American International Auto Show.

This year's show had more than its share of unveilings, although some cars that should have been here, weren't. In some ways this show was a success, but then again, it could have been better.

I was thinking what would be the easiest way to cover this auto show, and alphabetical order came to mind. So here is your A to Z look at this year's show. Over the next two issues of the *Niagara News*, we will examine the show in full detail. This week we look at cars from A to M and next week, from N to Z.

So, let's put this thing into gear shall we?

A is for Aston Martin, which sadly didn't think Detroit was an ideal place to debut its new Vanquish superca. Instead, they'll do that in Geneva, Switzerland, in March. So the earliest I'll get to see this new car is in September, when it'll hit Aston Martin dealerships.

But, A is also for Audi, and Audi came prepared with all its current production cars, plus a fantastic R8 LeMans racer, which won the 24-hour race in France with a top-three finish.

Audi also showed a new concept car called the Steppenwolf (don't ask me why Audi named it that). The Steppenwolf looks like a cross between the current All-Road wagon and the TT coupe. Audi says, with this type of vehicle, people can enjoy the joys of a sports car with the practicality of an off-roader. This merging is not a bad concept, but, Audi, if you are going to build it, please make it prettier than the concept car.

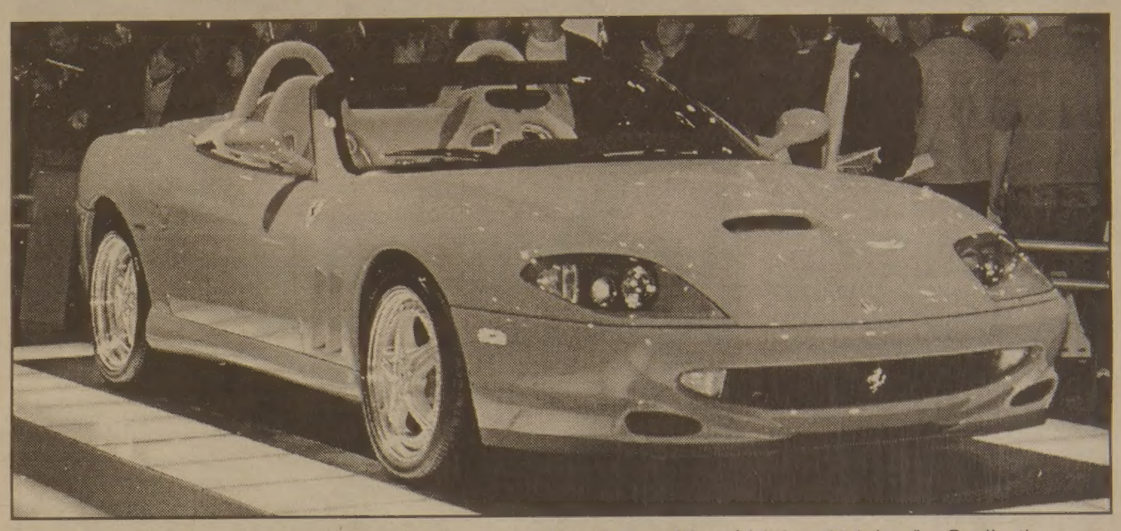
B is for BMW, who had one fantastic exhibit and also did some proper unveiling. For concept cars, it had a new coupe called the X-coupe. This, believe it or not, was based on the chassis of the X5 sport utility vehicle (SUV), but dressed in a sexy coupe body. (See, Audi, you can marry off-roader innards to a sexy coupe body.) The X-coupe is powered by a diesel engine surprisingly, so it can be fun to drive as well as affordable to drive. Chances are, BMW will never put it into production. What a shame.

However, BMW did unveil the new M3 Convertible to the world in Detroit, and what a wonderful car it is too. Just imagine, 335 hp in a 2+2 convertible, and all for about $70,000. I know that isn't cheap, but it does represent excellent value for the money when compared to its Audi and Mercedes-Benz rivals.

C is for Chevrolet, which showed a concept multi-purpose vehicle called the Borrego. Apparently, it could turn itself from a SUV to a pick-up truck or even a sports car. That idea is novel, but one that has been tried on concept cars many times before. Back to the drawing boards for you, guys.

D is for Dodge, which made its world debut of the 2003 model year Viper. 500 is a popular number with the new Viper, as it has a 500 cubic-inch engine, producing 500 hp and 500 lb/ft of torque. This time, the Viper R/T-10 is a true convertible with a simple drop-top roof system, which would be better for everyday use. With the extra power, it is likely to be faster than the older Viper too, a feature that is always appreciated by sports car enthusiasts. No word on exact prices yet, but one Canadian dealer said to expect to pay $150,000 for one. That is 50 per cent more than the current car, and that price could hurt its market. Also for the first year, they are only taking orders from existing Viper owners. Dodge will regret this dumb decision, big time.

E is for electric cars, and Corbin Motors had a bunch of tiny electric runabouts at the show. These things are fully for sale, and at $18,000, they aren't too pricey either. With only a 100 kilometre range, no one is going to use it on trips to Toront though. This isn't designed to be driven on the highway, but instead used in the city, to commute from home to college or work, which makes a lot of sense. Don't expect to pick anyone up with this car either, as it is a single seater, a feature that is a huge drawback. Fit another seat and I'll consider one, maybe.



The Ferrari 550 Barchetta, a truly fabulous V12 beast capable of hitting 300 km/h. Sadly the cars future for sale in Canada is not certain.

Photo by Nauman Farooq

F is for Ferrari and Ford, so let's start with the Italian Stallions. Ferrari made no world debuts here at the show, but instead made North American debuts of its new 360 Spider and the 550 Barchetta. These open-top versions of the 360 Modena and 550 Maranello will be a great hit with Ferrari fans. The 360 Spider boasts 400 hp and the 550 Barchetta producing an awesome 485 hp. Price, if you must ask, is expected to be around $250,000 for the 360 Spider and around $400,000 for the monstrous 550 Barchetta. Sadly, Ferrari hasn't decided if the 550 Barchetta will be sold in Canada, which just means another great Ferrari will be illegal in Canada. Damn.

Ford also had good unveilings at the show. First was the production unveiling of the new Thunderbird convertible, OK I'll tell you about that later. I will tell you that Ford had another nostalgic concept car called the Forty-Nine coupe. What looked like a modern-day interpretation of the 1949 Ford Coupe, this beautiful car could be in showrooms in about two years. It is based on the mechanicals of the new Thunderbird, and the Forty-Nine coupe also won the honour of this year's concept car at the show, so chances are you'll be able to buy one in the next few years. I surely hope so.

G is for GMC, which had an ugly concept truck called the Terracross. The less I say about this vehicle the better, because I have seen GMC make stupid looking concept vehicles before, but this just takes the cake. It is amazing how the Buick division of General Motors produced a stunning convertible called the Bengal in the same year GMC showed this ugly, ugly truck. It just boggles my mind.

H is for Honda, which had a concept SUV called the Model X. However, Honda's bold statement that this vehicle is only supposed to be bought by male customers is going to anger more than a few females. Honda dealers, prepare yourselves for some explaining.

I is for Isuzu, who had the most informative, friendly and charming show girl at their VehiCross stand. She wasn't just a pretty girl standing next to a car, but one that knew about Isuzu vehicles too, including upcoming models. Nice to finally see automakers hiring intelligent show girls to market their cars. (I'm not going to hear the end of this one, am I?)

But I is also for Infiniti, which showed its new 2002 Q45 sedan. This $71,000 luxury car might not be beautiful to look at, but it surely is packed with more technology than ever seen on a car at this price. It also has the brightest headlights fitted to any car ever, says Infiniti. Just great. I hope I never have to encounter this car in my rear-view mirror, or worse, coming the other way on the highway late at night.

J is for Jaguar, who didn't show its new X-type sedan, which is said to be its new entry-level model. After the stunning XK180 concept car in 1999 and the F-Type concept car of 2000, this year's Jaguar stand was dull.

K is for poor ol' Kia. Despite them having a huge floor area in the basement section of the show, Kia had the fewest number of visitors. I guess no one cared much for the new Kia Rio Wagon.

L is for Lexus and Lamborghini. Lexus showed its new IS300 Sport Tourer, which is an estate version of the IS300 sedan, and for a wagon it looked very good. Lexus also had the new SC430 convertible. The SC430 has a retracting hardtop roof like the Mercedes-Benz SLK, but in a larger, 2+2 body. Styling won't appeal to everyone, but I think it's very nice, especially in silver. The car will hit our showrooms in less than six months and I hope I can get to drive it.

What I would want to drive even more is the Lamborghini Diablo 6.0 VT. This 570 hp beast can hit 350km/h and costs a whopping $470,000. I want to drive this car so badly, it hurts, it really, really hurts.

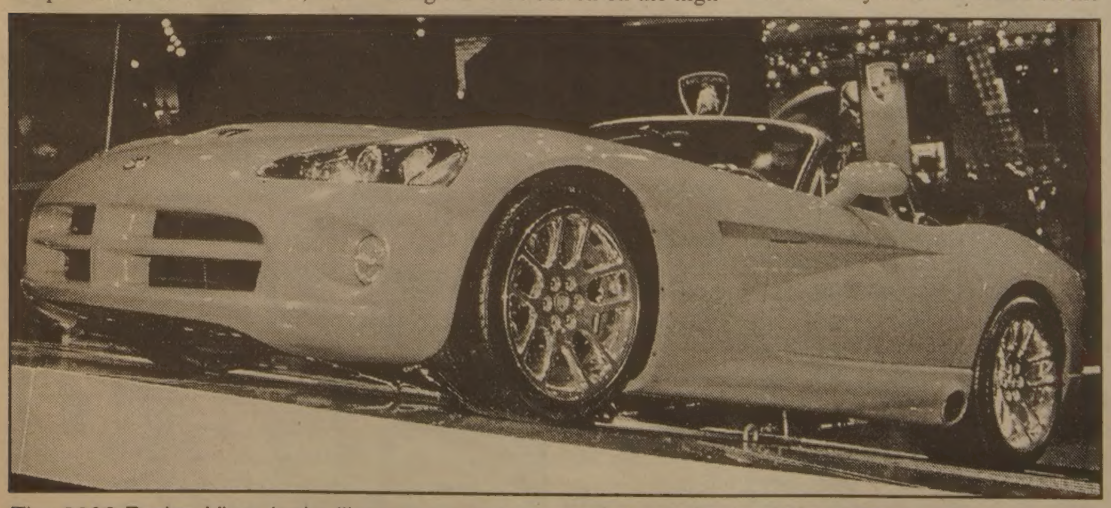
M is for Mini, and, yes, like the VW Beetle in 1998; the Mini has made a return too, only now, its not an Austin, Morris, or Rover Mini. It is simply called Mini with a hotter Mini Cooper version for sale too. This time, it is sold by BMW dealers. They are stabbing their own foot because BMW is also about to launch a new 3-series hatchback, that will cost about the same.

This new Mini just like the Beetle, will be a big hit. If you want one, get your deposit in now, and when they hit the showrooms in 2002, I can bet you can make a premium on them.

M is also for Mazda, which showed its concept RX8 sport sedan. This car is another look into Mazda's wacky Rotary engine design, last seen on the RX7. Mazda is saying this concept car is very close to production. If Mazda is serious I'm sure this will be a hoot to drive.

Mercedes-Benz is looking into expanding its market segment by introducing a C-class coupe, which will be the cheapest Mercedes-Benz model on sale in Canada. Prices aren't set yet, but expect to pay at least $35,000. I had a good look at the car and I think it is absolutely worth it.

Look for part-two of the show coverage in next week's *Niagara News*.



The 2003 Dodge Viper looks like a cross between last year's Dodge Viper GTS-R concept car and the Chrysler Hemi C concept car. The power rise to 500 horsepower should keep the enthusiasts happy, the 50 per cent price rise won't make customers happy.

Photo by Nauman Farooq

THROUGH THE HOOP

Men's team moves up to second place

By AARON WILSON
Staff Writer

The men's basketball team is in second place in the West region. The Knights are on a four-game winning streak moving to 4-1 on the season.

Niagara defeated Mohawk College of Hamilton, 84-63, Tuesday. Niagara came out well focused taking it to Mohawk 44-26 at the half, cruising to victory.

Matt Roberts, centre for Niagara, scored six, but it was his defensive effort that was big. Roberts pulled down 13 rebounds, taking 11 in the first half.

Roberts shut down one of the best centres in the division, Rob Ivanovic, who averages 24 points per game. Roberts held him to seven points.

"I thought they played weaker offence than I expected, especially their big men. We played as a team, knew what we had to do, and did the best we could," says Roberts.

Haldon Hutchinson, captain, who netted a game-high 21 points, says. "That was the best two halves of basketball we have played all year."

Hutchinson says the team needs to improve on "playing consistent 40-minute basketball."

Ernell Ellis, forward, scored 16 points. Ellis says the reason the team was well focused Tuesday was because, "we have a goal of finishing 11-1 the rest of the way to have a good playoff spot, and we came out gunning."

Ernell Ellis throws one down.

Photo by Aaron Wilson

Edson Jones, point guard, scored 13 points, all in the first half. Jones says, in the second half, "We came out strong, but sometimes it is hard to keep your focus, and we had some lapses."

Haldon Hutchinson shoots for three against Mohawk.

Photo by Aaron Wilson

Coach Ralph Nero says, "Our guys played hard, but we lost a little of our intensity in the second half."

Niagara defeated Redeemer College of Ancaster, to nail their third win of the season on Jan. 19. The Knights won 98-64 at home, getting great production from rookies Kyle Young, and Landon Walsh. Young, forward, got four blocks, and Walsh, point guard, scored nine points. Ellis led all Knights with 24 points.

Curtis Francis, forward, represented Niagara in the OCAA All Star Game held on Jan. 20, at Fanshawe College of London. He scored six points in that competition.

Francis was also in the Slam-Dunk Competition, and Three Point Competition, neither of which he won, but he did win the Showboat award for showing some fans at Fanshawe his bag of tricks.

"It was a great experience. After seeing the competition last year for the first time, I wanted to play."

The men's next game is against Fanshawe College, of London, in the Welland campus gym tomorrow at 2 p.m.

Niagara men's volleyball team 4th in Canada

By JOËL D. HERRINGTON
Staff Writer

We're climbing.

Niagara College's men's volleyball team is fourth in the country.

Last Friday, in Hamilton, the men's volleyball team received an unexpected challenge from the 2-6 Mohawk Mountaineers.

The Knights improved their season record to 9-0, yet it took them all five games to pull-off a victory.

Following scores of 25-17 and 25-18 in the first two games, the Mountaineers fought back to win 25-23 in game three and 25-19 in game four.

Although Niagara stands 14 points ahead of Mohawk, the Mountaineers gave the undefeated Knights a run for their money.

The Knights improved their season to 9-0, yet it took them all five games to get a victory.

By forcing a fifth game, the home team needed only 15 points to end Niagara's eight match winning streak.

As they were facing a possible upset, Blair Cudmore's Knights buckled down and squeezed out an 18-16 triumph.

Niagara leads the West Region with 18 points, 369 kills and 96 shots blocked.

Tonight, Nipissing University will visit the Mackenzie building gym for an 8 p.m. rumble.

As for the women's team, they battled hard but came up short. In contrast to Mohawk's lowly men's team, the women have a much better record. They have 12 points, which is good enough for third place.

The results of each game could have gone either way. After Niagara lost 25-23 and 25-20 in games one and two, Mohawk eluded a fourth game with a close 26-24 victory.

Even though Diane VandenHoven and the Knights have only played seven matches, the fourth-year veteran is still averaging 3.7 points per game. With seven regular season matches left to play, coaches Carolyn Welden and Laura Chatterton have guided their squad to a 3-4 record.

Welden's Knights will also be in action tonight, as they face off against the second-place Nipissing Lakers. The Knights hit the court at 6 p.m.

Mohawk defeats women's basketball team

By AARON WILSON
Staff Writer

The women's basketball team's home winning streak has ended at two. The Knights lost to Mohawk, of Hamilton, 72-62, on Jan. 23. Niagara is now 3-9 on the season, threatening to make the playoffs.

Niagara played two hard quarters but ran out of gas against one of the division's best teams. At one point in the second half, Niagara trailed 52-48 then made a good comeback, but fell in the end.

Forwards Jana Douglas and Carrie Stratford led the Knights' scoring with 17 points each.

"We came out strong in the second half, but had a downfall," says Douglas, adding the team needs to improve its concentration.

The team shot well from the foul line. Stratford says that in practice, "We are taking 40 to 50 shots, and ideally we want to shoot 80 per cent."

Other high scorers were Kelly Lewis, forward, with 15 points, and Katy Still, guard, who netted eight.

Coach Georgie Groat says, "We played really well. We just need to tighten up on boxing out better." Her take on what happened in the second half was "they (Mohawk) stepped up their full court press, and we just didn't adjust very well."

Niagara was on a two-game home streak beating George Brown, of Toronto, and defeating Redeemer in their previous game 60-37. Niagara dominated both halves of the Jan. 19 game, with Douglas getting the game high 21 points.

Niagara took their eighth loss, 70-39, on the road against Humber College, of Etobicoke, the division's best team.

On Jan. 20, Fanshawe College, of London, held the OCAA All Star Game. Representing Niagara were Lewis, Stratford and Douglas, part of Team Begg.

Lewis won the Three-Point Competition. She and Douglas played the all-star game, with Douglas getting four points.

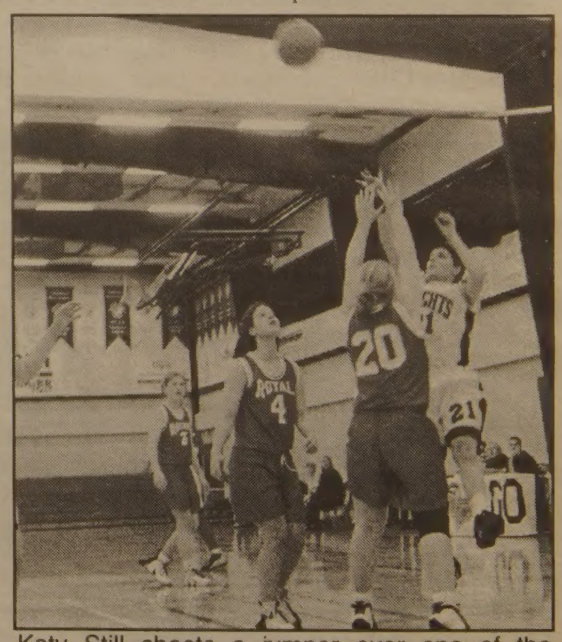
"It was really fun. I got to meet new people. There were a lot of fans. It was enjoyable," says Douglas.

Stratford played two ball with Haldon Hutchinson, guard for Niagara's men's basketball team.

"It was really different," says Stratford.

The game's final score was Team Bacvar 73 and Team Begg 63.

Niagara's next game will be tomorrow against Fanshawe College, at home in the gym at 4 p.m.



Katy Still shoots a jumper over one of the Mohawk players.

Photo by Aaron Wilson

SPORTS

Sports world may become a bit more extreme

By SCOTT ROSTS
Staff Writer
Column

As Super Bowl XXXV approaches, I'm getting excited, not because I want to see who wins a Baltimore Ravens versus New York Giants game, but because it means the National Football League (NFL) season is over.

Don't get me wrong. I'm a football fan and I do enjoy the NFL. I'm just eager to see the beginning of the Extreme Football League (XFL), the newest project of Vince McMahon and the National Broadcasting Co. (NBC).

The XFL brings the whole World Wrestling Federation (WWF) package to the world of pro football. With helmet cams, open season on quarterbacks, and cheerleaders who look like strippers, you can expect an image close to that of the WWF.

If you want statistics on the players, don't go to the XFL Web site. There you'll find pictures of barely dressed cheerleaders jumping around. I'll pause now as you rush to check out the Web site.

McMahon and NBC insist the XFL will not be scripted, but with his major project being the WWF, you must be skeptical. The pair are calling the XFL the sports side of "reality TV."

He says the XFL is for the fans and players "who just want to play." It's not about the money, he insists.

He's not lying, in one sense. You won't see million-dollar contracts here. The XFL is looking for athletes who will play for the league's standard salary ($45,000 US) and leave the real money to McMahon and NBC.

Whether a "true fan" is going to be interested in the XFL is questionable. There are a few rule changes. A team must run or pass for a one-point conversion. There are no field goals here. There's no fair catch rule. The league will even encourage players to get together with the cheerleaders, activities which are prohibited in the NFL.

We will see some former NFL players, such as Alvin Harper and Rashaan Salaam. We will see some former Canadian Football League players, such as Jim Ballard and Noel Prefontaine, former Toronto Argos.

My interest in the XFL is intense, and I'll be watching closely when it starts up. For now I'll give McMahon the benefit of the doubt, mostly because of the NBC connection. Anything could change though. If ratings dip below an acceptable level, it wouldn't be difficult for McMahon to manipulate some storylines.

If the XFL does work, will we see a bunch of spin-offs? The Extreme Basketball Association, XBA, where Shaq will be slam-dunking opponents? The Extreme Baseball League, XBL, where Roger Clemens will impale Mike Piazza with his bat, and cameras will follow the bleeding catcher to the hospital. Will he get the bat removed and come back to hit the game-winning home run in the last inning?

Maybe there'll be the Extreme Hockey League, XHL, where Marty McSorley will earn a $1 million bonus for taking a stick to someone else's head.

The XFL season is from February through April. It will be broadcast every Saturday night on NBC. I don't know what to expect, but I bet it will be interesting.

Pete Rose isn't the only one affecting baseball's integrity

By AARON WILSON
Staff Writer
Column

One man stands in the way of Pete Rose. Bud Selig, but why? Rose is the greatest baseball hitter of all-time, and if someone deserves a second chance, it would be the greatest hitter in baseball history.

What is Selig's problem? OK. Wait a minute. I've heard it. "Pete Rose affects the integrity of baseball."

Hey Bud, wake up! Don't these other people affect the integrity of baseball: John Rocker, Darryl Strawberry, George Steinbrenner and Marge Schott? There are more, but these are just the recent ones.

Rocker said some horrible things, which I'm not going into in detail, but what happened, Bud? Rocker got a slap on the wrist.

Schott did the same thing, but was she punished as severely as Rose? I don't think so.

The truth be told, I think Bud holds a grudge against Rose. It has to be personal. We all know the last commissioner was ready to allow Rose a return to baseball, but got booted out in favour of Selig before he could make it legal.

I bet George, Darryl and Bud are great friends, because Strawberry has affected the integrity of baseball, not once, not twice but thrice.

He has been suspended more times than he has World Series rings, and yet a one-year suspension is his biggest punishment.

I do have sympathy for Darryl, but even Darryl has sympathy for Rose. So why can't Selig? Doesn't a person deserve a second chance? We all know you handle those you give second chances to like a rope on fire, but one person is pure evil in your books, so evil, that he doesn't deserve his second chance?

I thought at the end of the season, when Barry Larkin put a rose on third base, this action signified a lot of things. One is that the players want to see Rose back in baseball, and, two, the fans want to see it. What exactly is your problem, Bud?

I'll end with a question directed to the players and fans: Do you think Selig affects the integrity of baseball?

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Niagara Knights out-cheer the fans

By JOËL HERRINGTON
Staff Writer
Column

When an eight-man bench supplies more cheering and enthusiasm than an entire crowd, you know there's a problem.

I'm referring to the lack of support our varsity sports teams have been receiving.

Two weeks ago, during a men's volleyball match against Canadore, the Knights' bench was yelling twice as loudly as the crowd watching. I don't see any reason for this disappointing support. Our athletes deserve better from their fans.

At the beginning of the season, assistant coach Kerby Bentley hoped that every game would be filled with applause and ovations. Maybe Bentley should have asked Santa Claus for his wish to come true, because the fans at Niagara College certainly haven't been in the gift-giving mood.

Is it so hard to clap your hands for a Shawn Barbisan volleyball smash into the open court? Is it that difficult to scream "woo-whoo" when Haldon Hutchinson nails a three-pointer in basketball.

Last year, the men's volleyball team finished No. 1 in Ontario and No. 4 in Canada. In 2000-01, they hold an unbelievable record of 9-0. These guys are untouchable within the Western Division. Even when the Knights aren't playing at their full potential, they dismantle opposing teams with the greatest of ease.

Nearly every game overflows with powerful spikes, impenetrable defence and uncontrollable energy. Could you imagine what these guys would do if the stands were full? Could you imagine how intimidated the opponents would feel if the Mackenzie building erupted on each home point?

J. R. Ross of the World Wrestling Federation says, it would be "pandemonium!"

Whether it's basketball, volleyball, rugby or soccer, the fans play an important role in a team's determination and intensity. As a sports reporter, sports fan and fellow Knight, I invite each and every one of you to attend a varsity game. Oh yeah, don't forget to cheer!

A future Niagara Knight drives to the hoop. A local select team, the Welland Warriors, dazzles the crowd between a varsity basketball doubleheader on Jan. 23, in a scrimmage match.

Photo by Aaron Wilson

See next Friday's *Niagara News* for a profile about 97.7 HTZ FM DJ - Jack Peets, and statistics on the employment rate for Ontario graduates.

WATER WATCH

Water problems influence programs' agendas

(This is the second part of a series on environmental programs at Niagara College's Glendale campus in Niagara-on-the-Lake.)

By PAUL FINELLI
Staff Writer

With incidents like Walkerton's contaminated water, it's no wonder Lisa Campbell pushes to keep the environmental technician programs at Niagara College on the leading edge.

Campbell is co-ordinator of the two-year Environmental Technician – Field and Laboratory (Co-op) and Environmental Technician – Water Resources (Co-op) programs, offered through the Centre for Environmental Training. She also teaches the sampling and analysis courses in the post-secondary and post-graduate environmental programs.

Campbell said the constant curriculum upgrading in the programs is thanks to an advisory committee of 14 people from the environmental industry. She cited, with a proud grin, an example of the "one-of-a-kind" environmental technician programs here.

"We're one of the few schools that actually offer any sort of a (complete) water-treatment technology type of program."

As an independent consultant and, this year, a lecturer in local high schools on various environmental issues, she naturally promotes the career options available through the environmental programs at the college, such as environmental consultant and pollution prevention and control officer.

She said while the two technician programs "are similar in the amount of field technique and field experience the students receive," they differ in other major respects.

In the field and laboratory program, students do surveying and other practical applications, on campus and in environmental laboratories, using the on-campus air- and water-monitoring equipment. Campbell said these students "have a higher percentage of laboratory-based courses and chemistry-based courses. They do a lot more with different types of analytical techniques."

Lisa Campbell, professor and co-ordinator of Environmental Technician – Field and Laboratory (Co-op) and Environmental Technician – Water Resources (Co-op) programs, sits in her office. Campbell says it is necessary to continually advance Niagara College's "one-of-a-kind" technician programs.

Photo by Paul Finelli

In the water resources program, students learn the latest automated water-treatment systems and participate in environmental studies in conjunction with the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority. Campbell said the students specialize "in dealing with and managing water resources, which includes treatment technologies for (regular) water and waste water, as well as natural systems, wetlands and creeks," for example.

Though winter has arrived, she added, the field work for students continues. "In the winter, (when) we do soil we just go through the snow. We do groundwater down the wells and, if we need to access water, we just break the ice . . . We do year-round sampling because the industry does year-round sampling as well. And then it leaves the students with the opportunity to complete their co-op through the summer months when obviously it's better weather conditions."

The students are training for environmental jobs that are in high demand by the related industries. The field and lab program has been popular since its inception a few years ago because students "like the crossover, between getting the field and the lab techniques," she says. "And (we) find that upon graduation we have students that are doing strictly field work or students who are doing strictly lab work, or a lot of students that get to do a combination."

"The water and resource program used to be primarily treatment based, and we've changed it slightly so that there's a lot more dealing with natural systems to increase the scope of skills and employability that the students will get."

She added she has seen particular growth in this program and, given stories like E. coli-contaminated drinking water in Walkerton, Ont., it is "much more imperative" that students be better skilled.

"I've had a number of inquiries by people, as a result of the Walkerton incident, asking about the type of training that we provide. So those people coming out will understand natural systems, as well as all the different treatment technologies, and understand the lab component of how to do testing for water quality and things like that."

(Next week: the advancement of environmental management.)

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STUDY IN JUSTICE

College student driven by love for the law

By JENNIFER CHORNLEY
Staff Writer

Legislation is his life's blood. Whether as a law clerk, which he'll be when he graduates from Niagara College, or as a federal Member of Parliament, which he tried to be last November, Ed Booker, 26, is driven by his love of the law.

The St. Catharines resident, a New Democrat, is on a co-op placement with the law firm Singh and Houlahan in that city where, "in a nutshell, my job is administrative." He ensures court materials are ready for cases.

What intriques him is the "demand for precision. You have to create a document that is perfect, clear and concise." He explains that it's crucial to be accurate: the colour of the car, the time of day, what happened at what moment.

That fits perfectly with what he declares to be his "worst personality trait — being a perfectionist. Everything I do, everything I get, needs to be perfect." On the flip side, he ranks handling stress well as his top strength.

It's a good bet he will attend law school. On the shortlist are the universities of Toronto, Windsor in Ontario or, Victoria in British Columbia. "A lot of avenues are still being explored. Law school is the most prominent one."

It's criminal law that draws him because "I enjoy the challenges posed by this particular area of law, but again it is wide open. Who know? I don't look at the future that far in advance. I want to get through the four months of school, then see what comes about."

The political world draws him, though, as a moth to a flame. He threw his hat into the federal election as an NDP candidate in the Niagara Falls riding, declaring his advantages as having been "young, idealistic and full of energy . . . with a genuine interest and care. . . . The NDP is the only party concerned for people and investing in the country."

Despite his age, he's already a 10-year veteran of the political process. He's been interested since 16 and has attended three political conventions (two for the Liberals, one for Reform-Alliance) and several "meet Paul Martin functions."

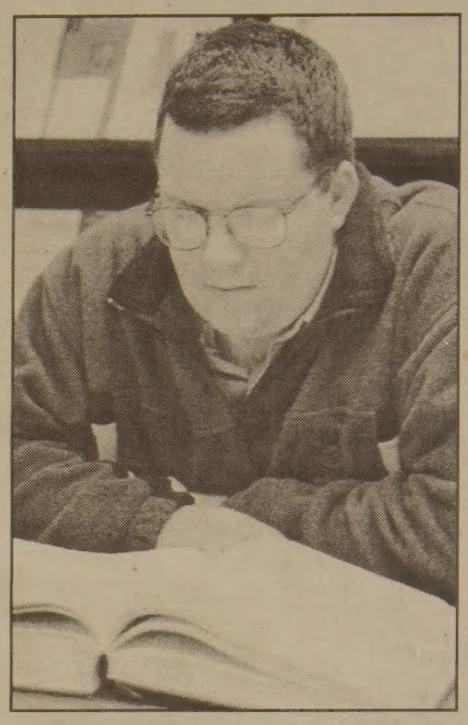
In Booker's political view, Canada is for Canadians. "I care for the country as a whole," he says, citing Prime Minister Jean Chrétien's "two clear visions of Canada to choose."

"I wanted to make sure one of those visions was for Canadians."

As a student he held a summer job in Toronto in a tinsmith's shop riding public transit and meeting "a lot of interesting people" on the trips. He says he understands the Prairies' issues by having worked a total of 18 months on dairy farms in Alberta's foothills between Lethbridge and Medicine Hat and one in Langenburg, Sask. In his view, Ottawa has "shafted" the provinces financially.

It is Canada's future that draws his energy, specifically children. National development, health care, and the four E's of the economy, the environment, employment and education complete his list of key issues.

He says Canada has a strong economy, but he is afraid economic sovereignty will be lost in a globally driven marketplace if the Chrétien Liberals don't stand firm. The North America Free Trade Agreement will not benefit Canada unless "fair trade not free trade" changes are sought and Canada comes out of the Americans' shadow.



Ed Booker reads a law book in the Law Clerk study area.

Photo by Jennifer Chornley

Children are his passion. Ensuring their future drives his key issues' agendas. "These are amazing people with great imaginations." When you deprive the next generation of essential needs, he says, you are not investing in the country.

"The environment goes hand-in-hand with kids," explaining childhood allergies and asthma are increasing as wildlife and their habitats head toward extinction. "It's ridiculous. Canada is a huge country surrounded by water, but it's not safe to drink anymore. It's insane."

The situation in Walkerton draws his ire. "When government doesn't fund for water, they are putting people's lives at risk. The (Ontario Progressive Conservative government) introduced tough new legislation, . . . but there weren't enough people and not enough money. . . The tragedy is the government let the people down."

Booker says he'll continue in politics but is unsure in what capacity. He says his days on the campaign trail were a learning experience too: "The sheer exercise of thinking on your feet in front of people is a wonderful experience and a brain test."

Law school and politics will be on his short-term and long-term "to do" lists because "they go hand in hand." He's set a 10-year timeline to add lawyer and/or politician to his résumé.

As for where he'll put down roots, Booker smiles. "Waking up one morning in Fernie, B.C., and stepping out the door and just seeing mountains" is his "best moment in life." He settles on Lethbridge, Alta. "It's flat. There are cowboys and cowgirls." He laughs. "A change in scenery is just a couple hours away."

Among his other interests are umpiring national championship softball and reading F. Scott Fitzgerald novels.

"It's appreciating what you have and understanding if you don't have everything, it's not the end of the world."

Anavin Shahani (left), 19, of Niagara Falls, a business student, talks to Donna Mills, health promotor with the reproductive health program of Regional Niagara Public Health, about the importance of healthy conception. A booth was set up in front of the Hamilton Room at the Welland campus on Jan.15.

Photo by Terri Lynn LeBlanc

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OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

When winter weather takes its toll

By RACHEL MONTOUR
Staff Writer

Three disabled students say snow is their biggest challenge in the winter.

James Davis, 22, of Crystal Beach, Ont., is in the General Arts and Science program at Niagara College's Welland campus.

Davis says, "My biggest challenge is getting through the snow, especially when it's not plowed. The wheelchair is very hard to go though the snow. Usually I have to have somebody with me when I am going out in the snow or I have to make sure that it's plowed before I go out."

He says he feels trapped when facing an obstacle "because there is no way around it."

Asked if he stays inside more in the winter, he says, "Definitely. I feel like I stay inside more in the winter because of all the obstacles. The snow, it's not plowed as well and it's so cold. I don't feel it's fair, but because the cities won't plow I really have no other choice."

He says he "watches TV, uses the computer and pretty much gets lazy in the winter because I can't do too much."

He says his leg muscles tighten in the winter because of the cold weather. "It makes it hard for me to bend. Walking becomes more difficult."

Does he think the college is doing a good job plowing the snow? "I think they do a very good job. I don't think they could do much better. I definitely feel they try their best. They might think about having students push disabled people out in the snow so that they could get to their classes that are outside. It may make it easier for the disabled students. That way we could get back and forth to Hennepin or all the different places that require going outside.

"Sometimes even when the snow is flat it's still really hard and it's really cold on the hands to push through the snow."

He says he wears mitts that make it harder to push. "That's another reason I think it would be a good idea to have volunteers that push through the snow.

"I believe it would be beneficial to have volunteers to help push through the snow because it would mean less changes for disabled students. We would be able to keep the classes that are assigned. It would create a lot less confusion for those who have to switch our classes."

Bernard Cyr, 21, of Fort Erie, is in the two-year Office Administration-General and Office Administration-Executive (Co-op) program at Niagara College's Welland campus. Cyr uses a wheelchair because of his disability, spina bifida. Spina bifida is caused by a lack of folic acid in a mother's diet during pregnancy.

"My biggest challenge in winter conditions would have to be travelling through snow. When the sidewalks aren't shoveled the wheels of my chair could get caught in potholes, ruts or pieces of ice and I could tip over."

Asked how he would deal with the situation, he says, "I would go to the residence or the disability office and ask them why it wasn't shoveled properly and have them remedy the situation."

He says it's a "fantastic idea to have volunteers help those in need of assistance for winter transportation in winter conditions when the snow is bad if it is a physically challenged person. Other students could benefit that are coming home from pub. For the winter stuff that would be a very good idea."

He says, "For the most part the college does a good job. There has been an instance where I have tried to get to school and my chair has tipped over." He says someone was able to help him.

Disabled students James Davis, 22, and Loretta Bruyere, 20, both in the General Arts and Science program at Niagara College, say snow is a challenge in winter.

Photo by Rachel Montour

"With a big, bulky winter coat I don't find that I have the same range of motion as when I am wearing regular clothes. What I tend to do instead of wearing a winter coat is I would double up on sweaters just to keep warm.

"I do my best to try and overcome the obstacle to the best of my ability. If there's a way around it I'd do that. I mean, granted, I'd have to cross a whole entire parking lot and, yes, it's out of the way, but if that was the only way I personally could get around it, that's what I would do." He says he would "absolutely find a way to do it."

Loretta Bruyere, 20, of Crystal Beach, is in the General Arts and Science program at Niagara College's Welland campus. Bruyere uses a wheelchair because of her disability spina bifida.

"Yes, it's a factor, the snow. We can't get through it. It's frustrating. We get mad because you can't get things done."

Asked what she does when she reaches a difficult obstacle, she says, "Usually I get out of my wheelchair and push it myself or get someone to help."

She says she thinks the college "is trying their best" to keep sidewalks clean.

"Yes, at the main entrance, but when we have to go to Mackenzie or something it's not cleared fully enough for the wheelchairs to get by and we get stuck in the snow."

Mal Woodhouse, of Thorold, director of facilities management services, says the college plows the snow "as often as possible."

"If we have a record snowfall, you can't beat Mother Nature. We do the very best we can."

Woodhouse says the college has outside contractors and college staff to remove snow.

The budget for all contracted snow removal, including parking lots, is $52,000 a year.

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